



Australian Bureau of Statistics

6306.0.55.001 - Microdata: Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012

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OVERVIEW

This product provides a range of information about the release of microdata from the May 2012 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH). The microdata are available as an Expanded Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) released with the approval of the Australian Statistician. The CURF is accessible through the Australian Bureau of Statistics

(ABS) Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) and the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL).

The RADL is a secure on-line database query system, under which microdata are held on a server at the ABS. Users of the RADL can submit programs in SAS, SPSS and STATA software to interrogate and analyse the microdata, and access the results.

The ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL) is the data analysis solution for high-end data users who want to extract full value from ABS microdata. The ABSDL provides a more responsive and interactive environment in which to analyse CURFs than that offered by the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL). The ABSDL is available to approved clients in a secure data laboratory in any ABS state or territory office.

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours has been conducted either annually or biennially since 1974. It is currently conducted biennially. The survey produces estimates of the composition and distribution of the weekly earnings of employees, the hours for which they are paid, and the methods used to set their pay (i.e. award only, collective agreement, or individual arrangement).

Estimates from the survey are used by Commonwealth and State government departments, employer associations, trade unions and academic researchers. Estimates from the survey were published in *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012* (cat. no. 6306.0) in January 2013, which is available on the ABS website.

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AVAILABLE PRODUCTS

An Expanded CURF is available via the RADL and ABSDL. Expanded CURFs allow more detail to be presented for some data items, for example, industry and occupation.

Further information about these services, and other information to assist users in understanding and accessing CURFs in general, is available from the CURF Microdata Entry Page on the ABS website.

Before applying for access, users should read and familiarise themselves with the information contained in this product and the User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs.

To apply for access press the green button below:

**Apply for
Microdata**

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about the survey and the microdata products can be found in this product:

- A detailed list of data items for the Expanded CURF are available on the Downloads tab;

- The Quality Declaration, Abbreviations and Glossary relating to these products can be found on the Explanatory Notes tab.

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Survey Methodology



SURVEY METHODOLOGY

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SCOPE AND COVERAGE

The May 2012 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) covers all employing organisations in Australia (public and private sectors) except:

- businesses primarily engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing (ANZSIC Division A);
- private households employing staff; and
- foreign embassies, consulates, etc.

The employees of employers covered in the survey are in scope if they received pay for the reference period, except:

- members of the Australian permanent defence forces;
- employees based outside Australia; and
- employees on workers' compensation who are not paid through the payroll.

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SAMPLE DESIGN

The survey uses a two-stage sample selection approach. The first stage involves selecting a probability sample of employer units from the ABS Business Register. The statistical unit for the first stage comprises all activities of an employer in a particular state or territory based on the Australian Business Number (ABN) unit or Type of Activity Unit (TAU). A sample of approximately 8,400 employer (selection) units was selected to ensure adequate industry and state/territory representation.

In the second stage, businesses selected in the first stage are asked to select a random sample of employees from their payrolls using instructions provided by the ABS. Data for approximately 55,000 employees contributed to the results in this CURF.

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WEIGHTING AND ESTIMATION

Records are weighted in two stages, reflecting the two-stage sample design. In the first stage, number-raised estimation is used to estimate the number of employees in each employer unit in the stratum. In the second stage, number-raised estimation is again used to estimate the total number of employer units, resulting in an estimate of employees. The final weight for each selected employee is a combination of the 'employer unit' weight and the 'employee' weight.

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RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

As the information on the CURF relates to a sample of employers and employees, rather than a full enumeration, estimates based on the information are subject to sampling variability, that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the data had been obtained from all employers and employees. The difference, called sampling error, should not be confused with inaccuracy that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Collectively, these are called non-sampling errors.

Sampling error

The sampling error associated with any estimate can be estimated from the sample results. One measure of sampling error is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the degree to which an estimate may vary from the value that would have been obtained from a full enumeration (the 'true value'). There are about two chances in three (67%) that a sample estimate differs from the true value by less than one SE, and about 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the difference will be less than two SEs.

Another measure of the sampling error is the relative standard error (RSE), which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate.

Further information on sampling error is provided in the Technical Note of Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0).

Non-sampling error

Non-sampling error arises from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Efforts have been made to reduce non-sampling error by careful design of questionnaires, detailed checking of returns and quality control of processing.

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MORE INFORMATION

Further information on the survey methodology can be found in:

- Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0); and
- Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

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Using the CURF



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ABOUT THE CURF

The data included in the May 2012 Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) Expanded CURF is released under the provisions of the **Census and Statistics Act 1905**. This legislation allows the Australian Statistician to release unit record data, or microdata, provided this is done “in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of a particular person or organisation to which it relates.”

The ABS ensures the confidentiality of the data by:

- removing any information such as the name of the business that might uniquely identify a business or individual
- changing a small number of values - particularly unusual values
- controlling the detail available for all records on the CURF
- excluding some data items that were collected
- reducing the level of detail for some data items
- controlling the modes of access to restrict access to more detailed data
- placing restrictions on how the data are used, supported by both information in the User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs, the undertaking signed by the head of each organisation and the terms and conditions signed by each user.

Steps to confidentialise the data sets made available on the CURF are taken in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the data sets and optimise their content, while maintaining the confidentiality of respondents. Intending purchasers should ensure that the data they require, at the level of detail they require, are available on the CURF they are intending to use. The full list of survey data items included on the CURF is provided in the Excel spreadsheet entitled 'EEH CURF Data Items List' accompanying this release.

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IDENTIFIERS

Each employee record has a unique person identifier - ABSPID.

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FILE CONTENTS

The May 2012 Employee Earnings and Hours Expanded CURF can be accessed via the RADL and ABS_DL and is available in SAS, SPSS and STATA formats. The Expanded CURF

comprises the following files:

Data files

- SAS FILE: EEH12E.SAS7BDAT contains the CURF data in SAS format
- SPSS FILE: EEH12E.SAV contains the CURF data in SPSS format
- STATA FILE: EEH12E.DTA contains the CURF data in STATA format

Information files

- DATA ITEMS LIST: contains all the data items, including details of categories and code values, that are available on the CURF
- FORMATS FILE: FORMATS.sas7bcat is a SAS library containing formats
- WEIGHTED FREQUENCIES.txt - this frequency file contains documentation of the employee level data. Data item code values and category labels are provided with weighted frequencies of each value. These files are in plain text format.
- UNWEIGHTED FREQUENCIES.txt - these frequency files contain documentation of the employee level data. Data item code values and category labels are provided with unweighted frequencies of each value. These files are in plain text format.

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USE OF WEIGHTS

The survey was conducted on a sample of employees from a sample of employers in Australia, and as such users need to take this into account when deriving estimates from the CURF. Each employee record contains a weight (FINPRSWT), and this weight indicates how many employees in the survey scope population are represented by this employee. Where estimates are derived from the CURF, it is essential they are calculated using the weights.

An employee's chance of selection in the survey varied considerably, depending on their employer's state, sector, industry and size. If an employee's survey weight is ignored, then no account will be taken of the employee's chance of selection, and the resulting estimates may be biased.

A number of the weights in the CURF have been slightly modified from the original survey weights for confidentiality reasons. This reweighting process has not resulted in significant changes to the estimates and the statistical validity of the CURF is not affected.

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EARNINGS

Weekly earnings data items have been perturbed and are expressed as continuous data items (in whole dollars only) on the CURF. Perturbation is a process of slightly altering the reported values to prevent identification of respondents. The distribution of values is not changed significantly through perturbation and the statistical validity of aggregate data is not affected.

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HOURS PAID FOR

'Hours paid for' data items were only collected for non-managerial employees. For

managerial employees, a value of '0' has been applied to all 'Hours paid for' data items in the CURF. It is therefore important to take this into account when undertaking analysis which includes the 'Hours paid for' data items.

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RECONCILIATION OF CURF WITH PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED DATA

Steps to confidentialise the data made available on the CURF are taken in such a way as to maximise the content of the file while maintaining the confidentiality of respondents. The steps taken to preserve confidentiality include:

- omitting the States and Territories data item included in previously published output
- reducing the level of detail available for the Employer unit size data item (available on the CURF in two broad groups)
- including industry data at the Division (1 digit) level only
- perturbing all earnings data items
- modifying the weights for some records

As a result, it may not be possible to exactly reconcile all statistics produced from the CURF with previously published statistics. However, these differences are not significant and should not diminish the value of the CURF in analysis.

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About the Data Item List



ABOUT THE DATA ITEM LIST

The May 2012 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) comprised two components, the first employer information which is primarily used to produce employment estimates and the second a series of approximately 31 questions related to individual employees.

Responses for individual employees are used to provide estimates of earnings and hours for specific groups of employees such as adults/juniors, full-time/part-time employees and occupation groups.

Information provided on the questionnaire is supplemented by data sourced from the ABS Business Register, which allows the production of estimates for employees classified by Industry, Sector and Employer size. Jurisdiction is also derived from a range of ABS Business Register classifications. Further information on the ABS Business Register is provided in the Explanatory Notes of Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0).

The following data items are available on the May 2012 EEH Expanded CURF:

- Weekly total cash earnings
- Weekly ordinary time cash earnings
- Weekly overtime cash earnings
- Weekly amounts salary sacrificed
- Weekly total hours paid for

- Weekly ordinary time hours paid for
- Weekly overtime hours paid for
- Sector
- Adult/Junior rate
- Whether received casual loading
- Full-time/Part-time status
- Sex
- Managerial status
- Employee status
- Type of employee
- Occupation major groups (1 digit ANZSCO 1st edition)
- Occupation sub-major groups (2 digit ANZSCO 1st edition)
- Occupation minor groups (3 digit ANZSCO 1st edition)
- Industry division (1 digit ANZSIC 2006)
- Employer unit size
- Method of setting pay
- Jurisdiction
- Jurisdiction of registered agreement
- Weight
- Random person identifier

The survey was conducted on a sample of employees from a sample of employers in Australia, and as such users need to take this into account when deriving estimates from the CURF. The weight data item indicates how many employees in the survey scope population are represented by the individual unit record, also referred to as the random person identifier. As such, the sum of the weights for all unit records in a particular category provides an estimate of number or employees in that category.

Care should be taken in the interpretation and use of estimates of employment, as the Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours is not designed specifically to produce estimates of numbers of employees. Users are directed to Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) as the primary source for official ABS estimates of employment.

Where estimates are derived from the CURF, it is essential they are calculated using the weighted values of a given data item. An employee's chance of selection in the survey varied considerably, depending on their employer's state, sector, industry and size. If an employee's survey weight is ignored, then no account will be taken of the employee's chance of selection, and the resulting estimates may be biased.

Users intending to purchase the Expanded CURF should ensure that the data they require, at the level of detail they require, is available in this product. The data items list for the Expanded CURF, including relevant population and classification details, can be found in the Excel spreadsheet available from the Downloads tab. This should be used in conjunction with the Glossary found in the Explanatory Notes tab.

The Expanded CURF contains 54,893 confidentialised employee records. Subject to the limitations of the sample size and the data classifications used, it is possible to interrogate the Expanded CURF, produce tabulations and undertake statistical analyses to individual specifications.

Weekly ordinary time, overtime and total hours paid for data are only collected for non-managerial employees. For managerial employees, a value of '0' has been applied to these data items in the Expanded CURF. It is therefore important to take this into account when undertaking analysis which includes weekly ordinary time, overtime and total hours paid or

derivations such as hourly rates.

Conditions of Use



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USER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Census and Statistics Act 1905 includes a legislative guarantee to respondents that their confidentiality will be protected. This is fundamental to the trust the Australian public has in the ABS, and that trust is in turn fundamental to the excellent quality of ABS information. Without that trust, survey respondents may be less forthcoming or truthful in answering our questionnaires. For more information, see 'Avoiding inadvertent disclosure' and 'Microdata' on our web page How the ABS keeps your information confidential.

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CURF DATA

The release of CURF data is authorised by Clause 7 of the Statistics Determination made under subsection 13(1) of the Census and Statistics Act 1905. The release of a CURF must satisfy the ABS legislative obligation to release information in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of a particular person or organisation.

This legislation allows the Australian Statistician to approve release of unit record data. All CURFs released have been approved by the Statistician. Prior to being granted access to CURFs, each organisation's Responsible Officer must submit a CURF Undertaking to the ABS. The CURF Undertaking is required by legislation and states that, prior to CURFs being released to an organisation, a Responsible Officer must undertake to ensure that the organisation will abide by the conditions of use of CURFs. Individual users are bound by the undertaking signed by the Responsible Officer.

All CURF users are required to read and abide by the conditions and restrictions in the User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs. Any breach of the CURF Undertaking may result in withdrawal of service to individuals and/or organisations. Further information is contained in the Consequences of Failing to Comply web page.

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CONDITIONS OF SALE

All ABS products and services are provided subject to the ABS Conditions of Sale. Any queries relating to these Conditions of Sale should be emailed to intermediary.management@abs.gov.au.

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PRICE

Microdata access is priced according to ABS Pricing Policy and Commonwealth Cost Recovery Guidelines. For details refer to ABS Pricing Policy on the ABS website. For microdata prices refer to the Microdata prices web page.

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HOW TO APPLY FOR ACCESS

Clients wishing to access the microdata should read the How to Apply for Microdata web page. Clients should familiarise themselves with the User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs and other related microdata information which are available via the Microdata web pages, before applying for access through MiCRO.

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AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

The ABS/Universities Australia Agreement provides participating universities with access to a range of ABS products and services. This includes access to microdata. For further information, university clients should refer to the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement web page.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

The Microdata Entry page on the ABS website contains links to microdata related information to assist users to understand and access microdata. For further information users should email microdata.access@abs.gov.au or telephone (02) 6252 7714.

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About this Release

The following microdata product is available from the May 2012 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours:

- Expanded CURF via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) and the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL).

The survey is designed to provide statistics on the composition and distribution of earnings and hours of employees and whether their pay is set by award, collective agreement or individual arrangement. Distribution and composition of employees' average weekly earnings and hours paid for is classified by sex, adult/junior, full-time/part-time, managerial/non-managerial, sector, industry, occupation, employer size and composition of earnings and hours paid for. Methods of setting pay data are also available by jurisdiction.

The microdata enables users to tabulate, manipulate and analyse data. Steps to confidentialise the dataset are taken to ensure the integrity of data and maintain

confidentiality of respondents. This includes removing any information that might uniquely identify an individual, reducing the level of detail for some items and collapsing some categories.

For information on applying for access to ABS CURFs, refer to the Microdata Entry Page on the ABS website <www.abs.gov.au/about/microdata>.

Explanatory Notes

Glossary

GLOSSARY

Adult employees

Employees who are 21 years of age or over, and employees under 21 years old who are paid at the full adult rate for their occupation.

Award only

Awards are legally enforceable determinations made by federal or state industrial tribunals that set the terms of employment (pay and/or conditions) usually in a particular industry or occupation.

Awards may be the sole mechanism used to set the pay and/or conditions for an employee or group of employees, or alternatively may be used in conjunction with an individual or collective agreement. Employees are classified to the Award or pay scale only category if they are paid at the rate of pay specified in the Award and are not paid more than that rate of pay.

Cash earnings

Remuneration paid to employees on a regular and frequent basis (quarterly or more frequently) for time worked or work done and for time not worked, such as recreation and other types of leave. Cash earnings (inclusive of amounts salary sacrificed) are gross amounts, that is, before tax and other items (e.g. superannuation) are deducted.

Casual employees

Employees who have been identified as being employed on a casual basis. Casual employees usually receive a higher rate of pay, to compensate for lack of permanency and leave entitlements.

Casual loading

A higher rate of pay an employee receives to compensate for lack of permanency or leave entitlements.

Collective agreement

An agreement between an employer (or group of employers) and a group of employees (or

one or more unions or employee associations representing the employees). A collective agreement sets the terms of employment (pay and/or conditions) for a group of employees, and is usually registered with a federal or state industrial tribunal or authority.

Employees are classified to the Collective agreement category if they had the main part of their pay set by a registered or unregistered collective agreement or enterprise award.

Employees

Persons who worked for a private or public employer and received pay for the reference period in the form of wages or salaries, a commission while also receiving a retainer, tips, piece rates or payment in kind. Persons who operated their own incorporated business with or without hiring employees were also included as employees.

Employer size

A measure of the size of the business in terms of the number of employees within that business. The employer size reflects the size of the business in a particular state or territory and not necessarily the size of the business Australia-wide.

Full-time employees

Employees who normally work the agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation. If agreed or award hours do not apply, employees are regarded as full-time if they usually work 35 hours or more per week.

Individual arrangement

An arrangement between an employer and an individual employee on the terms of employment (pay and/or conditions) for the employee. Common types of individual arrangements are individual contracts, letters of offer and common law contracts. An individual contract (or letter of offer) may specify all terms of employment, or alternatively may reference an award for some conditions and/or in the setting of pay (e.g. over award payments). Individual contracts may also be registered with a federal or state industrial tribunal or authority (e.g. as an Australian Workplace Agreement). However, the **Workplace Relations Amendment (Transition to Forward with Fairness) Act 2008** ceased the registration of new individual agreements from 28 March 2008.

Employees are classified to the Individual arrangement category if they have the main part of their pay set by an individual contract, registered individual agreement (e.g. Australian Workplace Agreement), common law contract, or if they receive over award payments by individual agreement.

Industry

Classified according to the **Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 2006** (cat. no. 1292.0).

Junior employees

Employees who are under 21 years of age and are not paid at the full adult rate for their occupation.

Jurisdiction

The workplace relations jurisdiction (i.e. federal or state) under which an employee is deemed to be for pay-setting purposes, based on the jurisdiction of the employer.

Jurisdiction of registered agreement

The federal or state industrial tribunal or authority with which written individual or collective agreements have been certified, approved or registered. Estimates have been compiled based on the workplace relations environment following the introduction of the **Fair Work Act 2009** and the subsequent introduction of the **Fair Work (State Referral and Consequential and Other Amendments) Act**, which allowed for the extension of the **Fair Work Act** to states that refer workplace relations related matters to the Commonwealth. The Fair Work system replaces the **Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act 2005** which came into effect in March 2006.

Employees based in the Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory and Victoria are covered by the national system. From 1 January 2010, employees of private sector employers in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania are also covered by the national system. Employees based in other states may be covered by either the national or state system depending on the circumstances that prevail in the workplace.

Managerial employees

Employees who have strategic responsibilities in the conduct or operations of the organisation and/or are in charge of a significant number of employees. These employees usually do not have an entitlement to paid overtime. Includes professionally qualified staff who primarily perform managerial tasks in conjunction with utilising their professional skills. Owner managers of incorporated enterprises are regarded as managerial employees.

Method of setting pay

How an employee's pay is set. Employees are classified to one of the following categories: Award only; Collective agreement; Individual arrangement; or Owner manager of incorporated enterprise. Employees classified to the Collective agreement or Individual arrangement categories are further classified according to whether the agreement is registered with a federal or state industrial tribunal or authority.

Non-managerial employees

Employees who are not managerial employees (as defined above), including non-managerial professionals and some employees with supervisory responsibilities.

Occupation

Classified according to the **Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), First Edition, 2006** (cat. no. 1220.0).

Ordinary time cash earnings

Payment for award, standard or agreed hours of work, including allowances, penalty payments, payments by measured result and regular bonuses and commissions. Ordinary time cash earnings are inclusive of amounts salary sacrificed. Excluded are non-cash components of salary packages, overtime payments, retrospective pay, pay in advance, leave loadings, severance pay, and termination and redundancy payments.

Ordinary time hours paid for

Award, standard or agreed hours of work, paid for at the ordinary time rate. Included are stand-by or reporting time which are part of standard hours of work, and that part of annual leave, paid sick leave and long service leave taken during the reference period. Ordinary time hours paid for was not collected for managerial employees.

Overtime cash earnings

Payment for hours in excess of award, standard or agreed hours of work.

Overtime hours paid for

Hours which are in excess of award, standard or agreed hours of work, paid for at the overtime rate. Overtime hours paid for was not collected for managerial employees.

Owner manager of incorporated enterprise

Persons who work in their own incorporated enterprise - that is, a business entity which is registered as a separate legal entity to its members or owners (for example, a limited liability company). Owner managers of incorporated enterprises are presented separately in estimates that are clarified by method of setting pay.

Part-time employees

Employees who normally work fewer than the agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation. If agreed or award hours do not apply, employees are regarded as part-time if they usually work fewer than 35 hours per week.

Permanent or fixed term employees

Permanent employees are usually employed on an ongoing basis and are entitled to paid annual and sick leave. Fixed term employees are employed for a specified period of employment, and may be entitled to paid leave.

Reference period

The survey refers to the last pay period ending on or before 18 May 2012. All estimates of earnings and hours in this publication are weekly, therefore, for employees paid other than weekly, estimates of earnings and hours have been converted to a weekly basis.

Salary sacrifice

Salary sacrifice is defined as an arrangement where an employee agrees to forgo part of their pre-tax salary in return for benefits. Common types of salary sacrifice arrangements include pre-tax contributions to superannuation funds and novated leases for motor vehicles.

SAS

A data analysis and statistical software system.

Sector

Public sector comprises local government authorities and all government departments and agencies created by, or reporting to, the Commonwealth, or State/Territory Parliaments. The

private sector comprises all organisations not classified as public sector.

SPSS

A data analysis and statistical software system.

STATA

A data analysis and statistical software system.

Total hours paid for

Equal to ordinary time hours paid for plus overtime hours paid for. Total hours paid for was not collected for managerial employees.

Weekly total cash earnings

Weekly total cash earnings of employees is regular wages and salaries in cash and is equal to weekly ordinary time cash earnings plus weekly overtime cash earnings.

Abbreviations

ABBREVIATIONS

ABN	Australian Business Number
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABSDL	Australian Bureau of Statistics Data Laboratory
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
CURF	Confidentialised Unit Record File
EEH	Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours
RADL	Remote Access Data Laboratory
RSE	Relative Standard Error
SE	Standard Error
TAU	Type of Activity Unit

Quality Declaration - Summary

QUALITY DECLARATION - SUMMARY

INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) are released in accordance with the conditions specified in the Statistics Determination section of the **Census and Statistics Act 1905** (CSA). This ensures that confidentiality is maintained whilst enabling micro level data to be released. More information on the confidentiality practices associated with CURFs can be found on the About CURF Microdata page.

For information on the institutional environment of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS),

including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

RELEVANCE

The May 2012 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) produces estimates of the composition and distribution of employee earnings, the hours they are paid for, and the methods used to set their pay (i.e. award only, collective agreement, or individual arrangement).

May 2012 EEH data are a key element of labour market information. The principal objective is to facilitate the analysis and monitoring of economic aspects of the Australian labour market. The survey is the only source of earnings and hours data by various methods of setting pay.

The May 2012 EEH CURF contains all data items available from the survey, with the exception of States and Territories. Some of the key data items on the CURF include:

- Weekly earnings - Ordinary time, Overtime, Amounts salary sacrificed, and Total earnings (available as continuous variables);
- Hours paid for - Ordinary time, Overtime, and Total hours paid for (available as continuous variables);
- Methods of setting pay;
- Employee characteristics - e.g. Sex, Full-time/Part-time status, Managerial status, Occupation (available at the 1, 2 and 3 digit ANZSCO level); and
- Business characteristics - Industry (available at the 1 digit ANZSIC level) and Employer unit size.

For further details on the content of the CURF, please see the data items list.

TIMELINESS

The reference period for the most recent Employee Earnings and Hours Survey was the last pay period ending on or before 18 May 2012. Results from the survey were released on 23 January 2013 in the publication Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0).

EEH CURFs from the 2006 and 2010 surveys were also released.

ACCURACY

The May 2012 EEH CURF generally contains finer levels of detail of data items than what is otherwise published in Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0). For more information on the level of detail provided, see the associated data item listings available from the data items list.

Steps to confidentialise the microdata are taken in such a way as to maximise the usefulness of the content while maintaining the confidentiality of respondents selected in the survey. As a result, it may not be possible to exactly reconcile all the statistics produced from the microdata with other published statistics. Further information about the steps taken

to confidentialise the microdata is available through the following link CURF confidentiality.

COHERENCE

The Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours has been conducted either annually or biennially since 1975. Since 1996 the survey has been conducted biennially. The conceptual framework used for this survey and key changes made to it since 1974 are described in Chapter 30 of Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

INTERPRETABILITY

Microdata: Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0.55.001) is a key source of information when using the CURF. It includes survey objectives, methods and design; survey content; data quality and interpretation; output data items; information about the availability of results; and the content of the CURF file.

Further information about the Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours is available in the Explanatory Notes and Technical Note in Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2012 (cat. no. 6306.0) and in Chapter 30 of Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

ACCESSIBILITY

Microdata products are only available to approved users. Users wishing to access the microdata should read the How to Apply for Microdata web page, before applying for access through MiCRO. Users should also familiarise themselves with information available via the Microdata web pages.

The CURF can be accessed through the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) and the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL). More detail regarding types and modes of access to CURFs can be found on the CURF Access Modes and Levels of Detail web page. Microdata from the EEH survey is only available as an expanded CURF, accessed via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) or the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL).

Any questions regarding access to Microdata can be forwarded to microdata.access@abs.gov.au or phone (02) 6252 7714.